

Testimony of Roselia Perez

Connecticut School Counselor Association

*in regards to*

**H.B. No. 5037- AN ACT ADJUSTING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING  
JUNE 30, 2023.**

Appropriations Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education

Public Hearing - February 17, 2022

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France and respected members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Roselia Perez and I am a school counselor in training attending Southern Connecticut State University. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding HB5037- An Act Adjusting the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2023. **Specifically, I am here today to testify about the importance of school counselors and the need to fund additional school counselors so that every student has access to a school counselor.**

Over the last 18 months, I have been the part-time college and career assistant at High School in the Community (HSC) in New Haven. HSC is a small magnet school that serves students from the Greater New Haven area. This experience has had a positive impact on me, and led me to enroll in the school counseling program at Southern Connecticut State University. HSC currently has one full-time school counselor, who I support in my role, for just under 275 students. I see first hand the various needs that our students have; from basic needs (such as food and housing safety) to academic needs (such as IEPs). These needs continue to expand in scope, more and more students are in need of resources to be able to complete and find success in their schools. New Haven was one of a few districts that remained fully remote until April of 2021. Covid has impacted all of us and students as a whole have become disengaged with their schools and communities. In New Haven, we have struggled mightily to connect with our students and families. The pandemic has magnified the need for more school counselors and a small ratio so that students can have the appropriate support and resources in order to succeed.

School counselors are an important part of student success in several ways. There are the practical aspects of building a course schedule, one that leads to a special interest area. Counselors also act as a resource hub for students that need accommodations. Many times, counselors can recommend an appropriate intervention for their students. Counselors assist with future planning; whether it is post secondary options or even transiting from elementary to middle school. Counselors partner with individuals inside or outside of the school to develop workshops and presentations that are relevant to students and families. For example, I helped

bring a financial aid expert to speak to students who were interested in applying to college and wanted to make it as affordable as possible.

I propose that the appropriations committee allocate funds particularly for school counseling and the hiring of additional school counselors. This is critical for the future of our children in Connecticut.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Roselia Perez

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